September 11, 2016 Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

I have a fairly decent sense of directions, but I'll admit that there are times I get lost, and for a very specific reason. I glance at two points on a map, get the general idea and plunge into the journey. My method works much of the time, but at other times, it fails. It fails a lot when I’m driving in the dark, a darkness I hadn’t thought to plan for.

The most aggravating kind of lost, though, occurs when I know my destination is just over...there, but I can’t figure out the way. I may even be able to see the building or landmark that I’m aiming for, but the right road eludes me.

Why do we get lost? We assume that we’ve got it all under control. We find ourselves unexpectedly in the dark. We’re proud. We ignore the guidance that’s at our fingertips, waiting. And after being lost, what a relief it is to be found.

Loving, forgiving God, guide me today, so that I may no longer be lost.

Amy Welborn
Living with Christ, September 2016
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**Liturgical Ministry Schedule—September 17-18, 2016**

This schedule can also be accessed at St. John’s website—http://stjohns.creighton.edu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Saturday 5:00 p.m.</th>
<th>Sunday 8:00 a.m.</th>
<th>Sunday 10:30 a.m.</th>
<th>Sunday 4:30 p.m.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRESIDER</strong></td>
<td>Fr. Merkel, S.J.</td>
<td>Fr. Amidon, S.J.</td>
<td>Fr. Hendrickson, S.J.</td>
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<td><strong>LITURGICAL ASSISTANT</strong></td>
<td>Mary Lee Brock</td>
<td>Bob Austria</td>
<td>Danielle Carr</td>
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<td><strong>ALTAR SERVER</strong></td>
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<td>Christopher Nubel</td>
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<td><strong>LECTORS</strong></td>
<td>Susan Recker</td>
<td>Jackie Ramos</td>
<td>Anna Nubel</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Eileen Burke-Sullivan</td>
<td>Erika Schwanke</td>
<td>Craig Nigrelli</td>
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<td><strong>PRAYERS</strong></td>
<td>Larry Brennan</td>
<td>Erika Schwanke</td>
<td>Kathy O’Keefe</td>
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<td><strong>EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS</strong></td>
<td>G. Selk</td>
<td>B. Austria</td>
<td>M.J. Slightam</td>
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<td></td>
<td>T. Bartek</td>
<td>Erika Schwanke</td>
<td>P. Yenko</td>
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<td>M. A. McDonald</td>
<td>Grace Krupa</td>
<td>J. Chiacchere</td>
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<td>E. Burke-Sullivan</td>
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<td>J. O’Brien</td>
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<td>P. Martin</td>
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<td>L. &amp; M. Brennan</td>
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<td>J. &amp; S. Scherr</td>
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**Readings for the week**

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<tr>
<th>9/11</th>
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<td><strong>32:7-11, 13-14</strong></td>
<td><strong>1:12-17</strong></td>
<td><strong>11:17-26, 33</strong></td>
<td><strong>12:12-14, 27-31a</strong></td>
<td><strong>15:1-11</strong></td>
<td><strong>15:12-20</strong></td>
<td><strong>15:35-37, 42-49</strong></td>
<td><strong>8:4-7</strong></td>
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**Mass Intentions Sept. 12—17, 2016**

**7:00 AM (Main Church)**

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday

**12:00 Noon (Main Church)**

Dolores O’Dell—deceased

**5:00 PM (Fr. Halley Chapel, LSJ’s)**

James John Corboy—deceased

**Weekly Offering Report**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekly Budget Goal</th>
<th>7,067.31</th>
<th>Annual Budget Goal</th>
<th>367,500.12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekend 9/3-4/2016</td>
<td>4263.11</td>
<td>Fiscal Year-to-Date Goal</td>
<td>70,673.10</td>
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<td>Above (below) weekly goal</td>
<td>(2,804.20)</td>
<td>Amount Collected YTD</td>
<td>59,247.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above (Below) YTD Goal</td>
<td>(11,425.20)</td>
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**Prayer Requests**

Colleen Davis
Doug Morris
Richard Grimit
Tyson Candow & family
Robert Kelly
Registration is now open for the St. John’s Youth Religious Education Program for the 2016-2017 academic year. Youth ages 3-14 are invited to join the program which meets on Sunday mornings from 9:00-10:15 am. Creighton students teach the classes (there are still volunteer openings for the upcoming year) and the core components of the program are religious education, faith formation, sacramental preparation and community building, which seek to educate the mind and heart in the Ignatian tradition. A Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Level One Atrium is offered for our 3-6 year olds. Sacramental preparation is offered during 2nd grade for First Reconciliation and Holy Communion and 7th & 8th grades for Confirmation. For more information please contact Jonathan Chiacchere at StJohnsReligiousEd@gmail.com.

**St. John’s Social Justice Committee**

**Fall Faithful Citizenship Sundays**

We will begin our series with a discussion on Catholic Social Teaching and its relationship to civic life with Roger Bergman, PhD and Mr. Joe Higgs on September 25th, 9AM, Lower St. John’s. The next 5 Sundays will involve discussions on immigration, death penalty, environment and poverty. We hope parishioners will join us in an attempt to enhance our learning and understanding of the world where we live, work and worship.

**St. John’s Hospitality Committee Meeting**

Monday, September 12 at New Cassel Retirement Center, just north of 90th and Dodge. Planning will take place for the parish Harvest Celebration in October. Everyone is welcome.

**Informational Meeting**

**11 Day Pilgrimage to Spain and Portugal**

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Our Lady of Fatima.

Learn more about this exciting opportunity visit Spain and Portugal with parishioners and friends in March, 2017. This meeting will discuss the itinerary and activities surrounding our travels. Please join us to learn more about this exciting pilgrimage!

**Sunday, September 18, 2016 @ 9:00 a.m.**

(between the two morning Masses)

**Coming Soon!**

**St. John’s Fall Adult Faith Formation Series:** November (6, 13, 20) and December (4, 11, 18) from 9:15-10:15 am in LSJ.

All are welcome!

**Reminder: Leadership Night and Meetings**

*September 13, 2016*  
*6:00 p.m. Lower St. John’s*

Administration, Outreach, Faith formation, Worship, Community Life commissions will meet to discuss the implementation of the goals for the Parish Community.

If you are unable to attend, please contact the chairperson of your commission or Fr. Snow, S.J.

**The St. John’s Bible**

Come see the Heritage Edition of *The Saint John’s Bible* in the Rare Books Room at Reinert-Alumni Memorial Library, just west of St. John’s Church.

Sunday Open Hours: 11a.m-3p.m.

**RCIA**

**Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** A Faith Journey for those discerning the call to become a member of our Catholic Church family. Please join us on September 11, 2016 @ 11:45 a.m. in Lower St. John’s. Inquiries—please email Tom Everson at Tom@kkad25.org or call 402-334-1391.

St. John’s will host an *African Catholic Mass on Sunday, Sept. 25 at 4:30 p.m.* to conclude Creighton University’s inaugural “Africa Rising Week.” The Rev. Vitalis Anyanike, pastor of St. Benedict the Moor and Holy Name Catholic churches and founder of the African Chaplaincy Ministry in Omaha, will act as celebrant, and Fr. Snow and several other Jesuits will concelebrate the Mass. The Rev. Andrew Ekpenyong, PhD, a Nigerian priest and professor of physics at Creighton, will deliver the homily. Music for the Mass will be celebrated by the Omaha African Chaplaincy Choir. A reception will follow the Mass in Lower St. John’s.

Please join us!

**Service and Justice Volunteer Fair**

*Mike and Josie Harper Center, Ahmanson Ballroom*  
*Wednesday, September 14, 2016 1:00—4:00 p.m.*

All faculty, staff, students, alumni, parents and friends are invited to this year’s Service and Justice Volunteer Fair, hosted by the Schlegel Center for Service and Justice. Visit with more than 80 local volunteer agencies to find the service opportunity that is calling you. For more information, contact: Wendy Maliszewski at 402.280.1419 or wendymal@creighton.edu.
Sometimes Moses gets his way with God. The people of God, Israel, got fed up with the God Who had failed to feed them up in the desert. Moses had gone up the mountain to listen to God and what he heard shocked him. His people, according to God, had abandoned the Saving-From-Egypt God for one they had made with their own hands.

We hear in this First Reading from Exodus God’s decision to abandon Israel and to form a new nation founded upon Moses himself. Moses, in a sense, says that he has a better idea. He reminds God of two things. God has a history of power and care for Israel which would be forgotten. Then Moses reminds God of the promises made to the great servants of God, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. In a sense, God has to be faithful to Israel as a nation, because God has revealed the Divine personality in a public, historical manner. God has to be faithful to Himself by being mercifully faithful to Israel.

I have a Jesuit friend who, on the night of entering, when asked his favorite Gospel story said that he liked the story of Christ’s birth the best. He told me later that it was the only one he really knew was in the Gospel, but he didn’t know which one.

Most of us recall easily the story of the Good Samaritan, The Feeding of the Five Thousand and of course, the Nativity. The Gospel for today is well-remembered, especially the thirdparable about the father-son split and the sibling rivalry at the end of the story. Parables are delightful to ponder - there are so many different angles and possibilities of interpreting. For whom are these three portraits painted? To whom does Jesus direct the teaching or impact? The Tax Collectors and other sinners are finding these stories delightful and comfortable. The Pharisees and Scribes would be getting a little hot under their self-righteous collars as they hear such new teachings. We will know who we are by how comforting or challenging these parables are to us; are they a pain in the neck or a comfort to the heart?

I am attracted to my spinning all kinds of new thoughts about this old and familiar parable of the bad son and good father and jealous older brother. Many more gifted authors than myself have done this so well. I would rather imagine several differing out-plays, or afterwords which are not recorded here, but have been played out in the lives of many of us and continue to the present.

The Returnee has a great time with his friends, neglects his stuffy older brother and pulls the same disappearing trick a week later. His father puts out the “No Vacancy” sign and changes the locks. The older son celebrates the father’s return to normalcy and right-thinking.

(Theme) Humans are ultimately so weak that even God’s mercy is limited. Severity is the only deterrent to moral fragility.

The returning wanderer stays home, but constantly reminds his older brother of just how judgmental and righteous his older brother was upon his own return. He knows and has received his forgiveness from his father, but cannot let go of being judged and criticized by his older sibling. The father continues comforting the older to be patient and the younger to forgive as he has been forgiven. The younger son finds it somewhat enjoyable to yank at the noose he has fashioned around his brother’s neck.

(Theme) It is good to be forgiven, forgiving is optional. Love is a response - not a have-to.

The younger son, after all his friends have left, begins remembering the events of his recent past and those memories are so real that they outshine the father’s forgiveness. The father keeps reminding him in word and gesture that the son is even closer to the father than before he left. The son knows this, but cannot feel it. Logic keeps a strict account and the son knows that he might go off again, or if not that, he knows he remains imperfect and so is not worthy. The older son has let go of his feelings and desires to reestablish fraternal affection. The father and older son create a support-group and have an intervention to which all his friends are invited. They use reason, stories from Scripture, put on dramatizations, tell their own stories, but nothing can convince the younger son to accept forgiveness. He knows, but he remembers and is embarrassed so much by his past.

(Theme) Being forgiven, as with being loved, is not reasonable. Forgiving self is different from forgetting. Holding on to one’s identity, no matter how painful that grasping might be, is easier than letting go to the simple reception of being known and loved. It is a matter of pride then; personal sin is the greatest achievement, that is nobody ever sinned so greatly, and letting go of that prize is too humbling.

The Pharisees and Scribes listened and kept getting insulted no matter which way they turned it over. Their personal and cultic powerbases were being challenged and the image of a merciful God was eating away their strong hold on the role of the Law in relating to this God. It is interesting to picture with whom we identify at different times. As with dreams, we can be all of the characters, having all the responses.

“O God, how much we value your mercy. All mankind can gather under your protection.” Ps. 38, 8

Fr. Larry Gillick, S.J. 2010

Taken from Creighton University’s Online Ministries web site: www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html

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